

**Minutes**  
**Regular meeting of the City of Reading Planning Commission**  
**June 26, 2012 at 7:00 pm**

**Members present:**

Ermete J. Raffaelli, Chairman  
Brian J. Burket, Vice Chairman  
Michael E. Lauter, Secretary  
Wayne Jonas Bealer, Assistant Secretary

**Staff present:**

Andrew W. Miller, Planning Office  
Frederick T. Lachat III, Department of Law

**Others present:**

Robert R. Miller, Robert R. Miller PLS  
Sylvia B. Deyé, Dimensional Architecture PC  
Stephen F. DeLucas, Reading Eagle Company

Chairman Raffaelli called the June meeting to order, and asked for acceptance of the agenda. Andrew Miller asked that the agenda be modified to include a conditional-use review, requested by City Council the day before. Mr. Lauter moved to accept the modified June 26th agenda. Mr. Burket seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to accept the June agenda.

**Subdivision and Land Development:**

Schleicher-LeGrande Subdivision – final subdivision plan [0:01.22]

Robert Miller explained that the owner of 1813 Steuben Road (Schleicher) had for years maintained the 5021 square feet proposed for annexation, and built a decorative rock wall and garden on the slope. An offer was made to the owner of 1802 Hill Road (LeGrande) to buy the area outright, which would essentially double the size of the Steuben Road parcel. He said no new construction was being proposed. He then clarified a question about the notary statements. Andrew Miller felt the rest of the plan's issues to be minor, and suggested approval.

Mr. Burket moved to approve the final plan for the "Schleicher-LeGrande" subdivision. Mr. Lauter seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to approve the final subdivision plan.

**Resolution #21-2012**

Queen City Diner – Proposed Building Addition – final land development plan [0:06.14]

Ms. Deyé presented a written response to the latest Planning Office review, and distributed reduced sets of a revised plan to the Commission members. She itemized a number of the changes made: to the site map, corrections to the zoning data, labeling the rights-of-way, and the sources-of-title. She said they decided to keep the flagpole at the building's front, with some new container landscaping. She said she was still waiting on a plan and details for the new sight lighting, which will be completely replaced.

Mr. Raffaelli reminded that a concrete driveway apron, recently reconstructed, extends into the cartway of Morgantown Road, and should be corrected. Ms. Deyé hesitated in including anything that would trigger the Pennsylvania Department of Transportation's involvement, but intended to research it. Asked about the delay (the plan had previously been presented and approved in January), she cited the 'timing' of some decisions by the owner and some other scheduling preferences. Andrew Miller, based on the few other corrections required and the finality of the building design, advised a conditional approval subject to a lighting plan before endorsement and recording.

Mr. Bealer moved to grant another final land development plan for the Queen City Diner, subject to provision of the lighting/landscaping plan and whatever other corrections were still required by the Planning Office. Mr. Burket seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to conditionally approve the Queen City Diner final land development plan.

**Resolution #22-2012**

**Other business:**

§603.c.2 conditional use review–Metropolitan Apartments, 918 North 4th Street (conversion) [0:17.55]

Andrew Miller said he didn't have much to report, having just received the request for comment the day before. He characterized it as an application for an additional apartment unit, similar to several others the Planning Commission had reviewed. He said a public hearing was scheduled for July 17th, before the Commission would

meet again. He deferred to Mr. Lauter for some additional explanation, who questioned the orientation and features represented on the plan. Andrew Miller recalled a 2006 zoning matter of a grocery proposed as a replacement to a shuttered card shop, assuming it concerned the same part of the building. He said the owner claims an 'existing condition'; 36 units, versus the 35 recognized by the City records. Mr. Lauter thought the plan depicted the former retail space and its storeroom. He preferred they approve the additional unit, noting that the building was designed as apartments and the space remains. Andrew Miller added that it would only make it more 'conforming' to the zoning district. Mr. Lauter noted that what began as nice apartments have trended toward subsidized rents. Asked about the 25 parking spaces claimed, he recalled that they had purchased a neighboring parking lot from the Holy Spirit Lutheran Church, who retained an easement for their use during church functions.

Mr. Lauter moved to recommend that City Council approve converting the vacant spaces to residential uses, being the most conforming to the zoning district and the nature of the existing construction, subject to any building code and historic district requirements for the intended alterations. Mr. Bealer seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to forward the recommendation to City Council.

**Resolution #23-2012**

§508.3 agreement to extension–Jet Set Restaurant Parking Area [0:35.00]

Andrew Miller reported that this would be a fourth and more-indefinite extension, based on the efforts of the Law Department.

Pursuant to a June 20th email between the Planning Commission's solicitor and the applicant's legal counsel, and on-going discussions, Mr. Bealer moved to agree to an indefinite extension of the Pennsylvania Municipalities Planning Code's deadline (§508.3) for plan approval, provided a good-faith effort is made toward resolution of the highway-occupancy permitting and other issues, and authorizes the Law Department to enter into any agreements and communications deemed necessary to effect said extension. Mr. Burket seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to extend the review of the "Jet Set Restaurant Parking Area" plan, under the aforementioned conditions.

**Resolution #24-2012**

review the draft May 22, 2012 meeting minutes [0:38.23]

Mr. Burket moved to accept the May meeting minutes, as presented. Mr. Lauter seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to accept the May 22nd meeting minutes.

**Resolution #25-2012**

Mr. Bealer gave an update on the activity of the Blighted Property Review Board, and current interest in the rehabilitation and reuse of its target properties.

The Commission discussed the continued activity of the 'local redevelopment authority', and its relevance following the final disposition of the Kenhorst Boulevard reserve center property.

Mr. Lauter moved to adjourn. Mr. Burket seconded. And the Commission voted unanimously to adjourn the June 26th meeting. – 7:49p